

# NRCS Conservation Programs in Nebraska

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# EQIP Fund Allocations in 2016



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- EQIP – National Initiatives \$3.2 million
  - Ogallala SI \$ 2.4 million
    - 4 Focus Areas: UBBNRD, LBNRD, CPNRD, MRNRD
  - NWQI \$ 863,000
    - 2 watersheds: Bazile Creek, Wahoo Creek
- EQIP General \$ 17.4 million
  - EQIP General Distribution
    - State Initiatives \$ 3.5 million
    - Historically Underserved & BFR \$ 1.7 million
    - Balance to LWG Fund Pools \$ 12.2 million

# EQIP Fund Allocations in 2016

## – State Initiatives

• Forestry	\$ 500,000
• Wildlife	\$ 870,000
• Monarch Butterfly	\$ 100,000
• Tribal	\$ 100,000
• AFO	\$ 1,000,000
• NE WQI	\$ 400,000

# EQIP Fund Allocations in 2016

## – State/National Initiatives

•Organic	\$ 200,000
•Energy	\$ 25,000
•High Tunnel	\$ 100,000
•CAP-CNMP	\$ 200,000
• Climate Change	\$ 1.8 million
• Soil Health – Demo Farm	\$ TBD

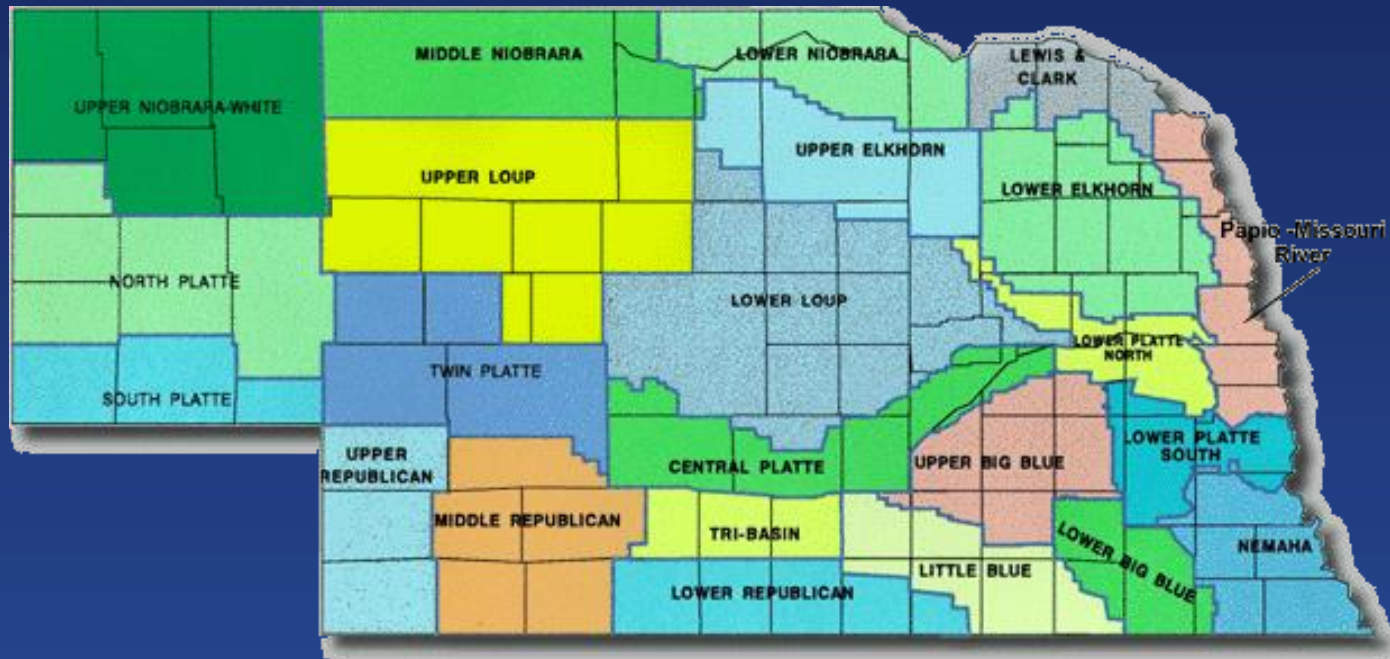
## EQIP – FY2017 Time Lines

- Local Work Group Meetings – Feb/March
- Determine Special Initiatives & Fund Pools - July
- Revise FY17 ranking tools - August
- Complete Practice Payment Schedule – September
- FY17 application cutoff Date – October 21, 2016
- Application ranking deadline - TBD



# Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- Local Work Groups



# Application Cutoff Dates

- Single cutoff date, 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of October – 14 LWG's
- Single cutoff date, 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of November – 4 LWG's
- Two cutoff dates, First in August/September & second in January/February – 1 LWG
- Multiple cutoff dates for AFO's and CNMP CAP's only. Monthly or Bimonthly – ECS staff
- Utilize FSA electronic mailing list for notifications



# Ranking Tools – Screening Tools

- Add State ranking question to prioritize water quantity applications on Stream Flow Depletion Factor based on the location of practice
- Prioritize C/S for VRI using speed control over VRI using zone control
- Revise Area of eligibility for VRI systems. Identify statewide priority Areas (Zone Control).
- **Require 5 years previously irrigated for Irr. to Dry payments. Low priority if < 5 yrs.**
- Revise WIN ranking questions related to the filling reuse pits. Reduce number or points.

# Ranking Tools – Screening Tools

- Revise WIN ranking to reduce emphasis on brush management increased emphasis on enhancement of wildlife habitat
- Delete cropland grazing question (State ranking question #2)
- Increase points for Degraded Plant Condition questions (State questions 7 & 8)
- Add screening criteria on applications for practice 314, Brush Management, to remove cedars. Tag as Low priority unless a prescribed burn is implemented in subsequent years to control cedar regeneration.

# Ranking Tools – Screening Tools

- Develop screening criteria for State wide fund pools
- Local Work Groups review and edit priority designations for local fund pools
- Low priority for SDI applications that replace an EQIP funded pivot

## Revise Fund Pools

- Create statewide fund pool for advanced irrigation technology (VRI, etc.)
- Add local fund pool for Irrigation systems and IWM
- Allocate funds 50/50 between cropland and grassland fund pools
- **Add Soil Health Livestock Integration Initiative.**  
“Build soil health through diverse rotations on their cropland and re-integrate livestock back into their operation”

## Practice 576 – Livestock Shelter Structure

- Add practice 576 to Nebraska Tech guide. Prioritize wood material over steel material. Allow portability. Ensure placement doesn't have negative impact on Grouse leks/grouse habitat.



## Practice 442 – Sprinkler System

- Reduce payment rate (EQIP General PR = \$30.30/LnFt)
- Remove scenario 3 “System Renovation, Renozzle”
- Add scenario for retrofitting pivots with speed control VRI



# Practice 441 – Irrigation System, Micro irrigation

- Increase payment rate. Increase payment % from 30% to 35% (EQIP General = \$563.56/Ac)
- Decrease payment rate

# Practice 430 – Irrigation Pipeline

- Combine all scenarios and use scenario #2
- Decrease payment rate

## Practice 449 – Irrigation Water Management

- Eliminate scenario for Basic Technique
- Increase payment rate scenario 3 “IWM, Intermediate Technique, Subsequent Years” (EQIP General PR = \$2.63/Ac)
- Decrease payment rate for Intermediate scenario

## Practice 587 – Structure For Water Control

- Combine scenarios number 7 “Flow meter with Mechanical Index” and scenario number 8 “Flow Meter with Electronic Index”. Remove references to Index type.
- Revise scenario #9, remove reference to electronic index.
- Add scenario to retrofit existing flowmeters with electronic indexing/telemetry

## Practice 533 – Pumping Plant

- Revise scenario 4 “Irrigation Surface Water”. Unit should be “Each” w/30 HP pump. (currently the unit is “Brake Horsepower”)
- Remove scenarios 6, 9, 11, and 13: scenario 6 “Livestock, with Pressure Tank, Equal to 0.5 HP”, scenario 9 “Livestock Without Pressure Tank HP”, scenario 11 “Solar –Powered Pump, 0.5 HP”, scenario 13 “Solar Powered Pump, 2 HP”
- Maintain all pumping plant options

## Practice 533 – Pumping Plant

- Increase payment rate for scenario 7 “Livestock, With Pressure Tank, greater than 0.5 HP and less than 2 HP” (EQIP General PR = \$1,678.14)
- Decrease payment rates on all scenarios
- **Revise policy to allow new solar system pumping plants to be installed on existing livestock wells only when a well test confirms the well is viable and would be feasible when converting to a solar system.**



## Practice 642 – Water Well

- Delete scenario 3 “Shallow Well, 100 ft. Deep or Less” (EQIP General PR = \$34.63/LF)
- Decrease payment rate for scenarios 3 and 4. Scenario 3 “Shallow Well, 100 ft. Deep or Less” (EQIP General PR = \$34.63/LF), Scenario 4 “Single PVC Casing, Greater than 100 ft. Deep” (EQIP General PR = \$19.52/Lf)

## Practice 340 – Cover Crop

- Reduce payment rate, all scenarios
- Increase payment rate for Multiple Species, scenario #2
- Combine scenario 1 “Single Species” and scenario 2 “Multiple Species”
- Reduce payment Cap to \$5,000/Yr. from \$15,000/Yr.

## Practice 340 – Cover Crop

- Decrease payment rates. Recommended \$30/Ac for single species. (EQIP General: Single Species = \$41.01/Ac, Multi Species = \$43.91/Ac)
- Increase payment rate, scenario 2 “Multiple Species” should be increased to \$45/Ac
- Allow multiple payments for a producer.  
(resource concern based instead of producer)
- Limit payments to a maximum of 2 years

## Practice 328 – Conservation Crop Rotation

- Add scenario which adds small grains to cropping sequence

## Practice 382 – Fence

- Eliminate Portable Fence, scenario #11. (NOTE: Doesn't meet NE Practice Standard)
- Add scenario for portable fence when establishing intensive grazing systems. Historically approved when using an H-brace at end of system.
- Add scenario to allow maxi shock cable to establish several interior pasture systems with permanent wood post at end of each segment. (NOTE: Pending practice standard review)
- Combine all barbed wire and all permanent electric scenarios.

## Practice 472 – Access Control

- Add scenario to exclude animals for a partial year prior to prescribed burn (Currently March 1<sup>st</sup> until after burn is completed in following year).  
Recommend scenario for early Spring grazing of cool season grass with Livestock removed by June 1st
- Reduce payment rate (EQIP General = \$26.46/Ac)
- Increase payment rate (EQIP General = \$26.46/Ac)
- Add scenarios to reflect rental rate variances across the State. (Current Statewide rate is low for Eastern Nebraska)



## Practice 314 – Brush Management

- Eliminate scenarios 2 “Mechanical and Chemical, Medium Infestation” and 3 “Mechanical and Chemical, Heavy Infestation”
- Increase payment rate scenario 1 “Mechanical and Chemical, Low infestation” (EQIP general PR = \$36.40/Ac)
- Establish annual payment cap (concern with high cost when in WIN contract)

## Practice 327 – Conservation Cover

- Decrease payment rate scenario 3 “Native Mix with Foregone Income, Crop” (EQIP General PR = \$339.20/Ac)

# Practice 500 – Obstruction Removal

- Eliminate from EQIP eligible practice list

# Practice 650 – Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation

- Change unit to “Acres” (Currently “Foot”)

## Practice 380 – Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment

- Change unit to “Each” instead of “Feet” on scenario 5 “Trees, Machine Planted” and scenario 6 “Tree, Machine Planted, Wildlife Protection”
- Allow red cedar as option in windbreaks

## Practice 620 – Underground Outlet

- Decrease payment rates
- Reduce number of scenarios
- Delete scenarios 1, 2, 3, and 5: scenario 1 “PVC or DW 2 to 3 Inlets”, scenario 2 “PVC or DW 4 to 5 Inlets”, scenario 3 “PVC or DW 6+ Inlets”, scenario 5 “Corrugated Wall 1 – 4 Inlets”.



## Practice 338 – Prescribed Burning

- Increase payment rate. (EQIP general “steep terrain” = \$12.22/Ac : “level terrain” = \$8.41/Ac)

## Practice 614 – Watering Facility

- Combine scenarios 2 “Steel Tank”(PR = \$0.82/gallon) and 8 “Steel Rim Tank – Concrete Base” (PR = \$0.89/gallon) and use scenario #2
- Decrease payment rates (Steel Bottom Tanks)

## Practice 378 – Pond

- Decrease payment rates. (Embankment)  
(EQIP General PR \$2.50/CuYd)

# Practice 410 – Grade Stabilization Structure

- Decrease payment rates

## Practice 645 – Upland Wildlife Habitat Management

- Implement payment cap of \$5,000/Yr. on scenario 4 “Wildlife Habitat Enhancement – Former Cropland – Foregone Income”

## Practice 484 – Mulching

- Decrease payment rate for fabric mulch – tree rows

# Recommended EQIP Fund Pools for 2017



## 2017 Local Fund Pools

- Cropland – 23 Total
- Grassland – 23 Total



# 2017 Area Fund Pools

## Area 1– West

- Cropland – BFR/SD
- Grassland – BFR/SD

## Area 2 – Central

- Cropland – BFR/SD
- Grassland – BFR/SD

## Area 3 - East

- Cropland – BFR/SD
- Grassland – BFR/SD

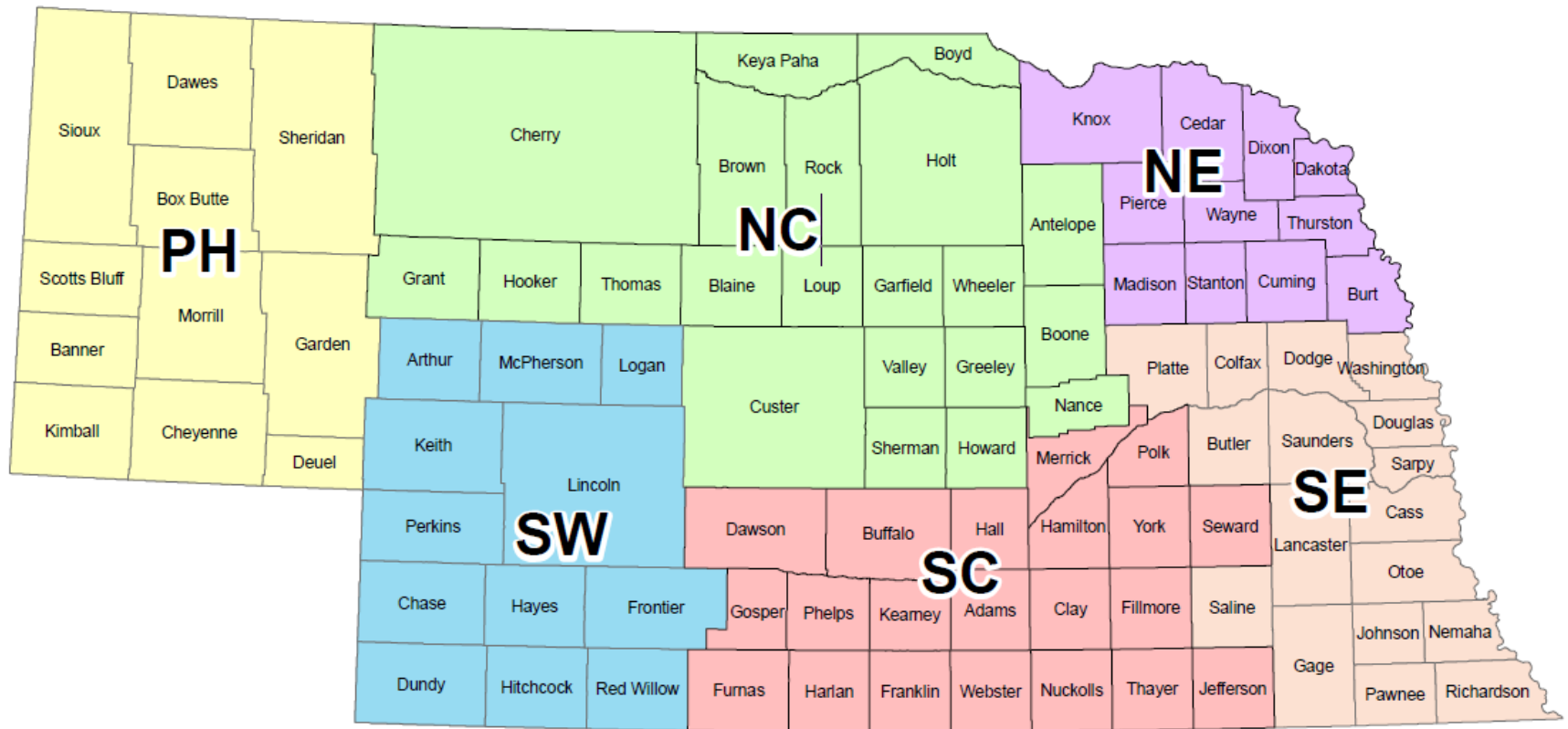
# 2017 STATE FUND POOLS

- **Special Initiatives - Nebraska**
  - Wildlife
  - Forestry
  - Seasonal High Tunnel
  - Animal Feeding Operations
  - Organic
  - Energy

## 2017 STATE FUND POOLS

- **Special Initiatives – Nebraska (cont.)**
  - Tribal
  - Conservation Activity Plans
  - Monarch Butterfly
  - Nebraska Water Quality Initiative
  - Climate Change
  - Soil Health – Demo Farm

# Areas for Soil Health Demonstration Farms

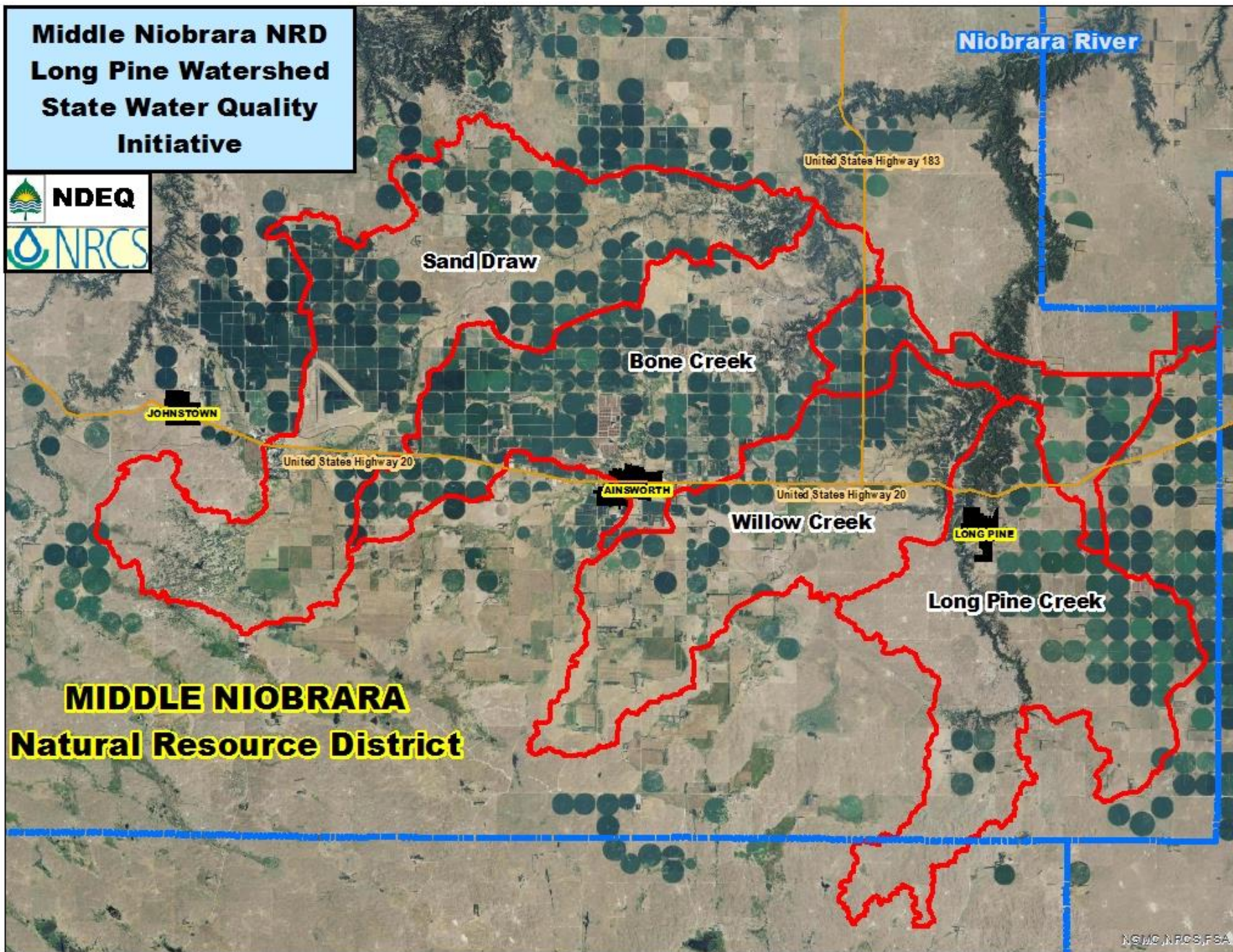


# Nebraska Water Quality Initiative





**Middle Niobrara NRD  
Long Pine Watershed  
State Water Quality  
Initiative**



**MIDDLE NIOBRARA  
Natural Resource District**

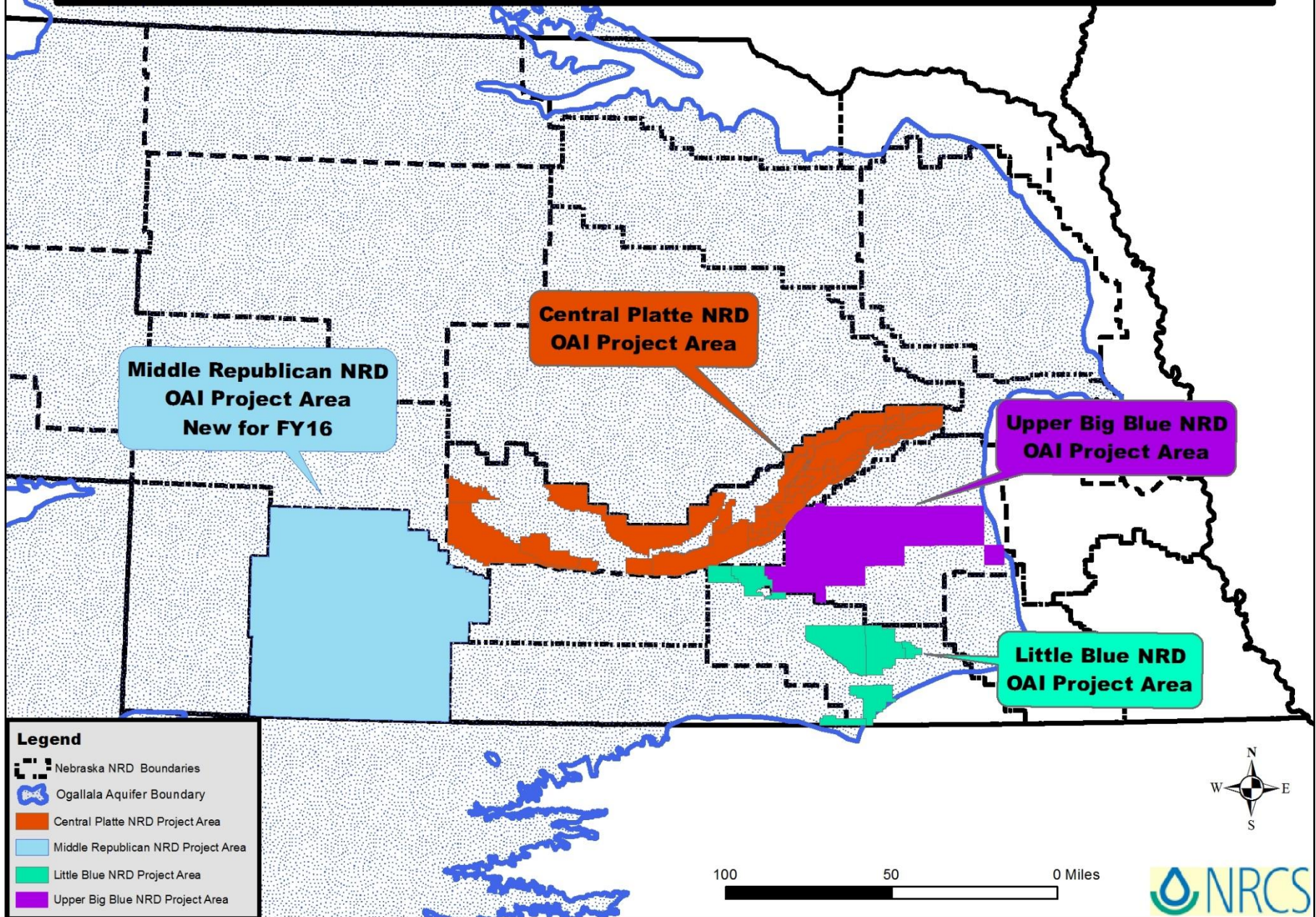


# Ogallala Aquifer Initiative





# NEBRASKA 2016 OGALLALA INITIATIVE AREAS

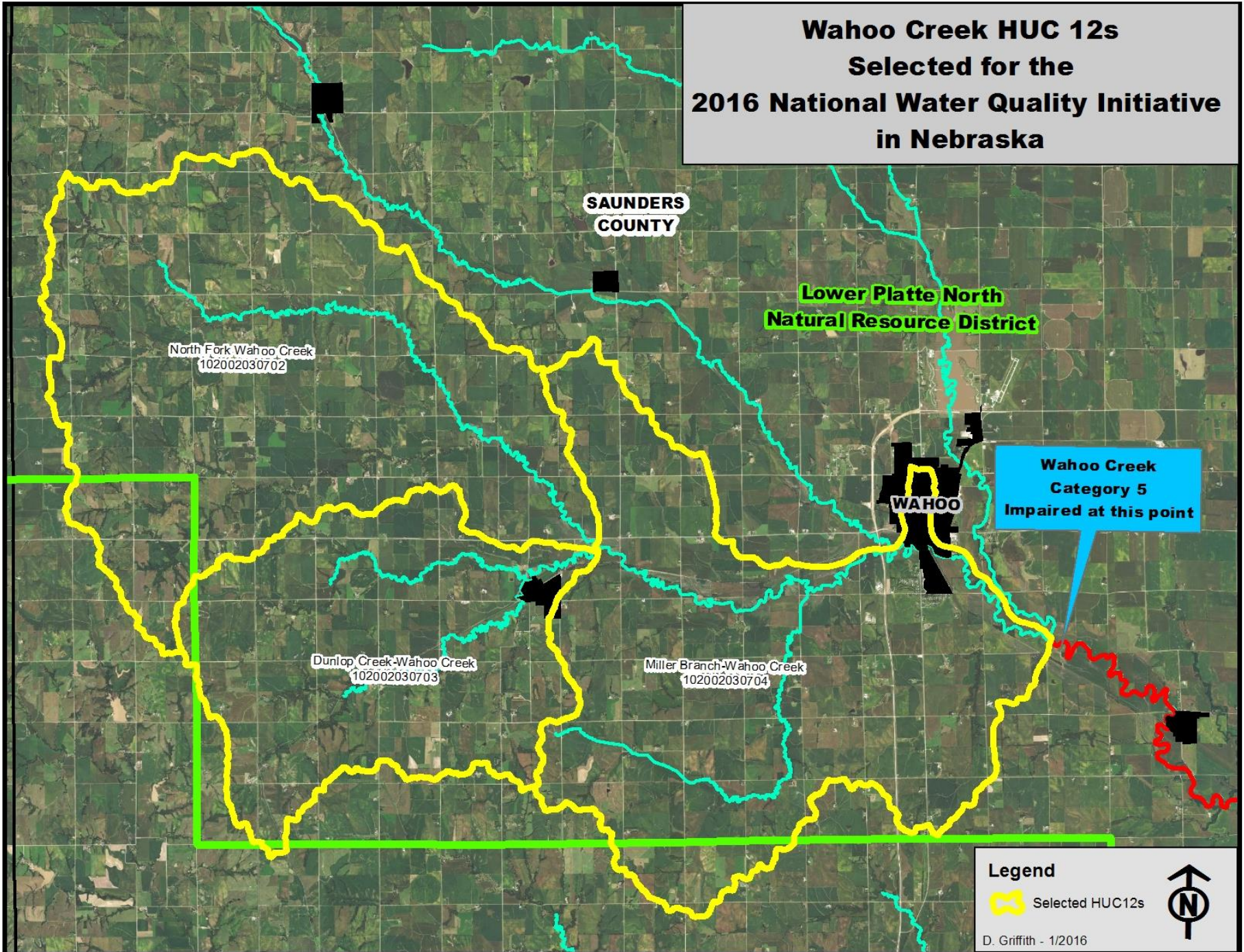




## 2017 State Fund Pools

- Special Initiatives – **National**
  - National Water Quality Initiative
    - Wahoo Creek - Saunders
    - Bazile Creek – Antelope, Pierce, Knox




**Wahoo Creek HUC 12s  
Selected for the  
2016 National Water Quality Initiative  
in Nebraska**

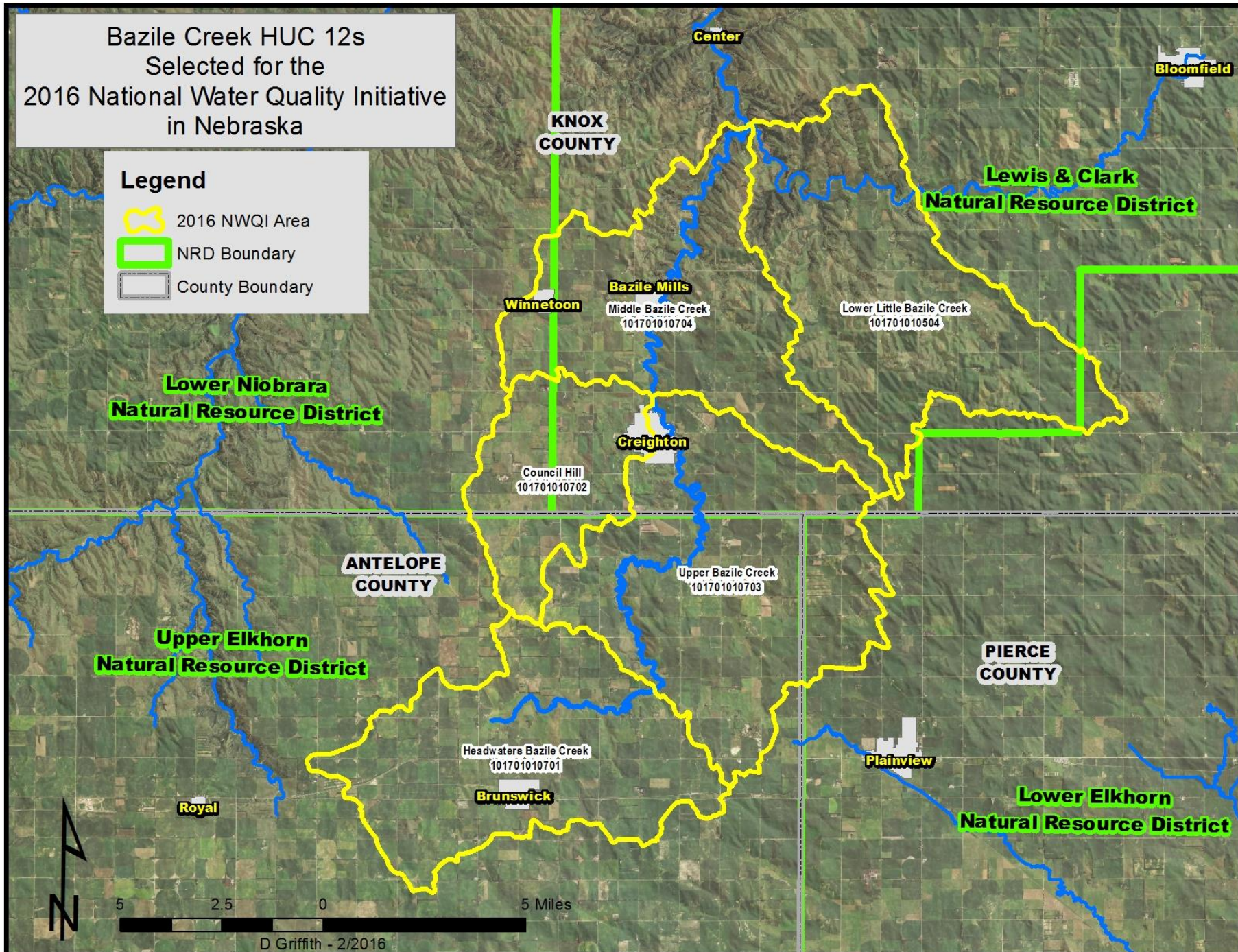




Bazile Creek HUC 12s  
Selected for the  
2016 National Water Quality Initiative  
in Nebraska

**Legend**

-  2016 NWQI Area
-  NRD Boundary
-  County Boundary





# Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)



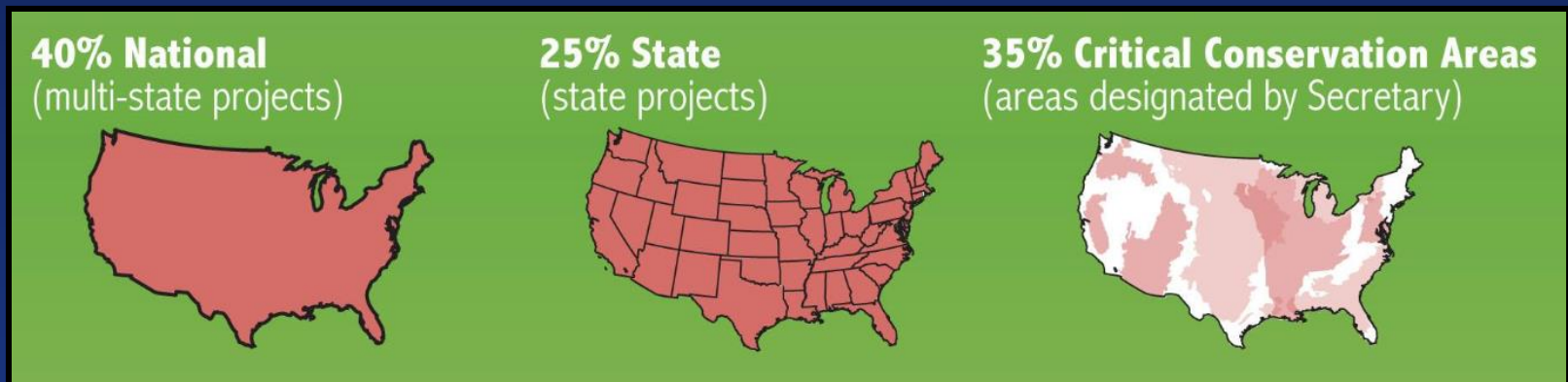
# RCPP Funding

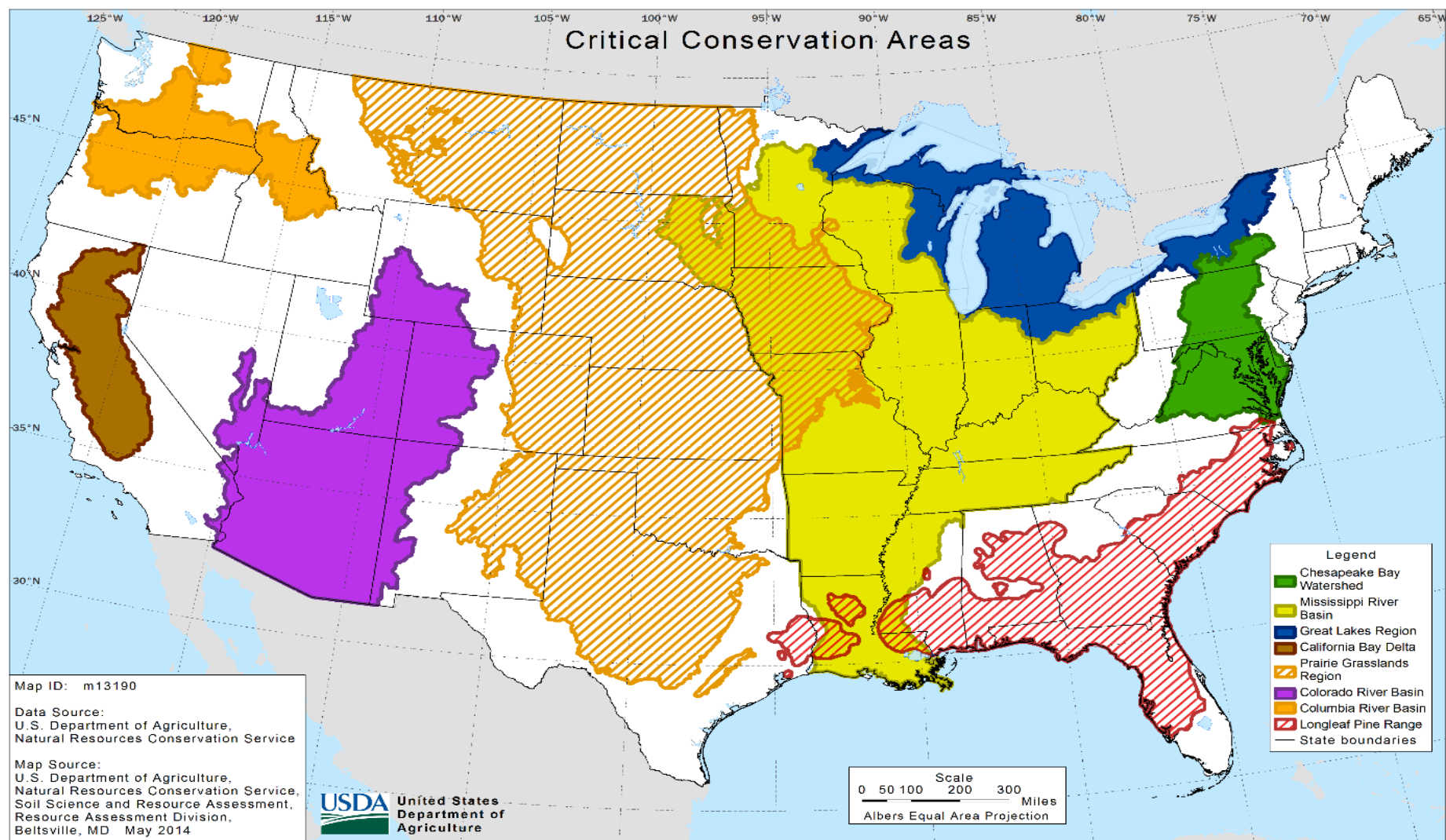
## Available Funding - National

- \$100 Million of Direct RCPP funding each year
- 7% of funds from the four covered programs (ACEP, CStP, EQIP, HFRP) reserved annually through April 1st

# Allocates funding by:

- 40% for projects based on a national competitive process;
- 25% for a state competitive process administered by the State Conservationist, and;
- 35% for projects in critical conservation areas.



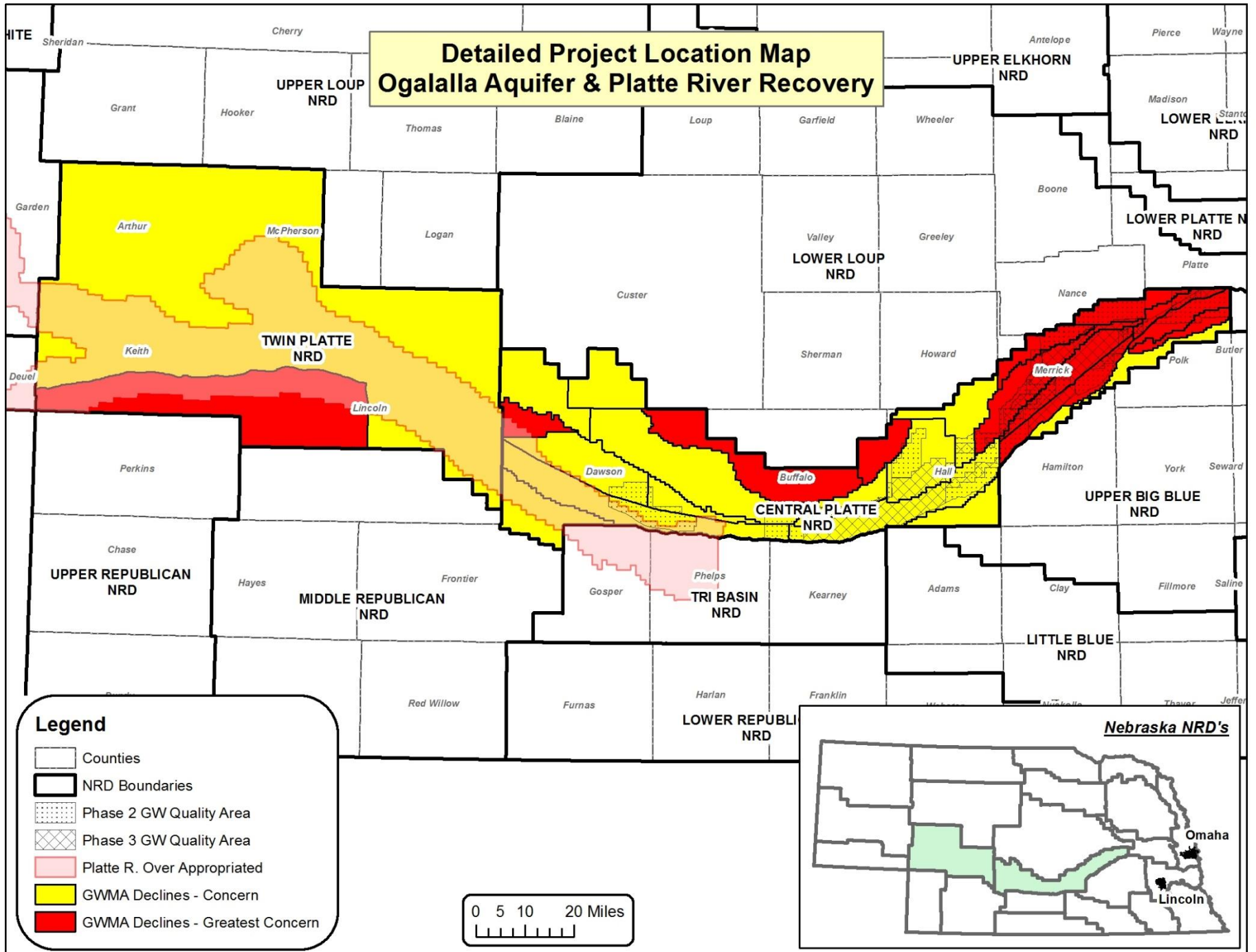


## **FY15 RCPP Approvals - Nebraska**

- **State Fund Pool**
  - **Ogallala Aquifer & Platte River Recovery (5 Years, 2015 – 2019)**
    - CPNRD, TPNRD, TMID, SCC, CDC
    - \$ 1.7 million
    - Application cutoff date = October 16, 2015

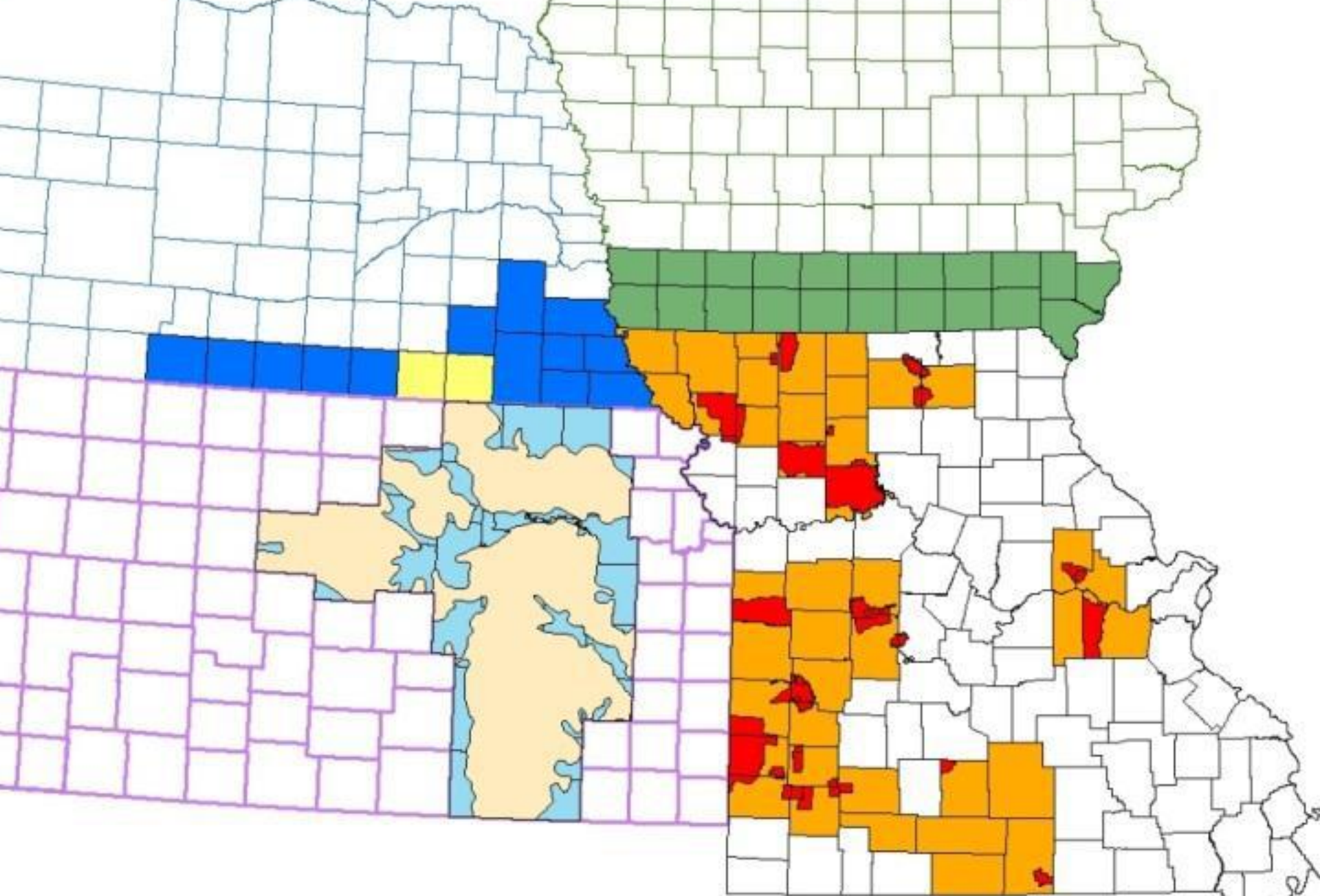


# Detailed Project Location Map Ogalalla Aquifer & Platte River Recovery



## **FY15 RCPP Approvals - Nebraska**

- **National Fund Pool**
  - **Regional Grassland Bird & Grazing Enhancement Initiative (5 years, 2015 – 2019)**
    - Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa
    - \$ 885,000 (Nebraska allocation)
    - Application cutoff date = February 19, 2016



## **FY16 RCPP Approvals - Nebraska**

- **State Fund Pool**
  - **3 Proposals Approved**
    - **Cropland Cover for Soil Health and Wildlife – NGPC**
      - \$700,000
    - **Lower Elkhorn Water and Soil Conservation Project**
      - \$400,000
    - **Republican Basin Conservation Partnership – LRNRD**
      - \$2.1 million

## **FY16 RCPP Approvals - Nebraska**

- **National Fund Pool**
  - **2 Proposals Approved**
    - **Midwest Ag Water Quality Ptnshp – Iowa Dept of Ag**
      - IA, IL, NE
      - \$9.5 million
    - **Innovative Tribal Conservation and GHG Mgt**
      - SD, NE, OK, NM, AK
      - \$1.8 million

# RCPP APF Timeline – FY17

- **March 14, 2016:** Announcement of Program Funding (APF) through grants.gov.
- **May 10, 2016:** Pre-proposal applications due
- **Week of July 18, 2016:** Announcement of selected pre-proposals.
- **September 19, 2016:** Full proposal applications due.
- **December 2016:** Announcement of projects selected for funding.
- Once agreements are signed, partnership activities and obligations may begin.



# Conservation Stewardship Program

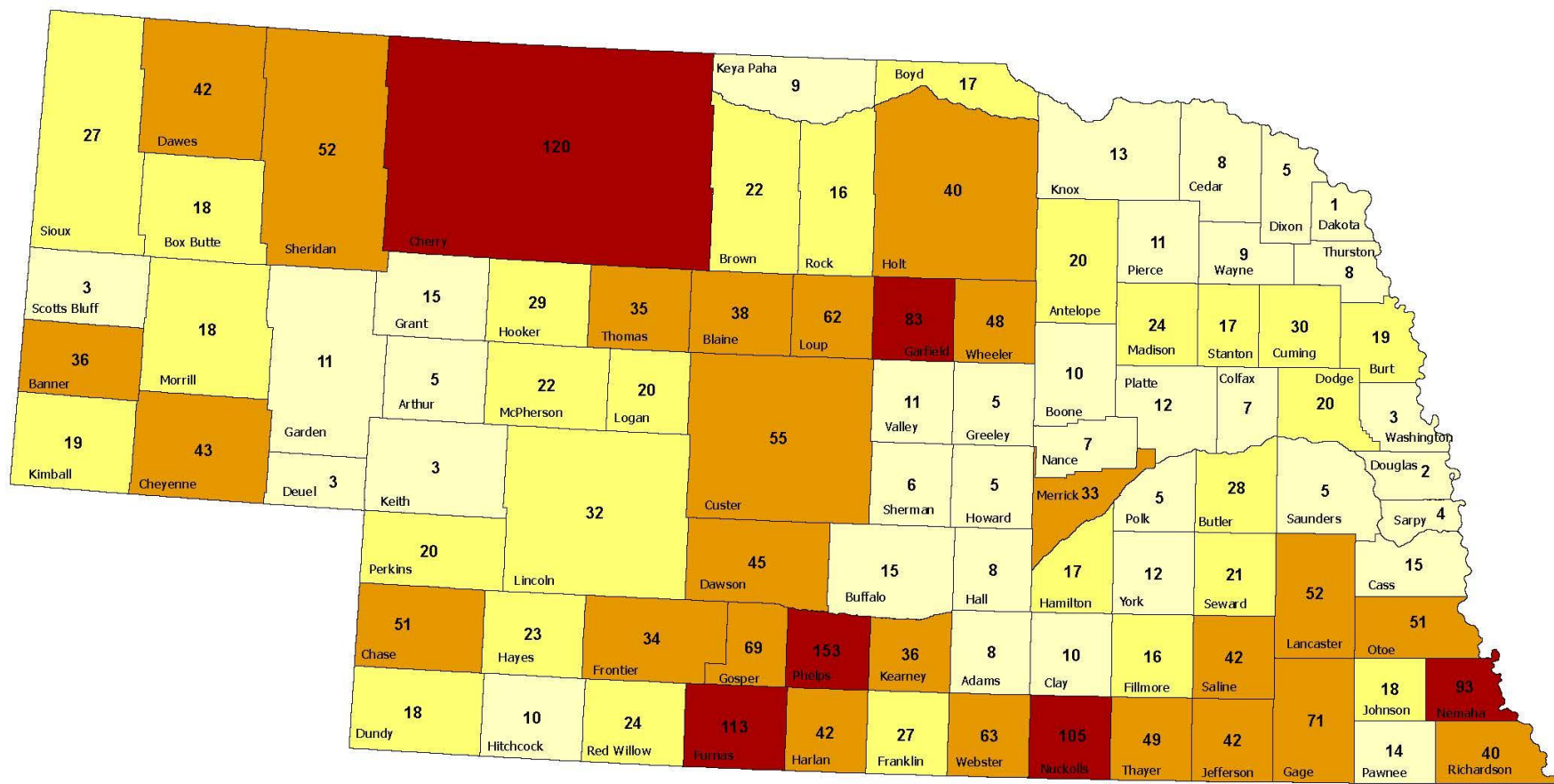


## CSP & CStP Contracts - Nebraska

- Contract Total = 2710
- Contract Acres = 5,237,884
- Annual Payments = \$58.2 million



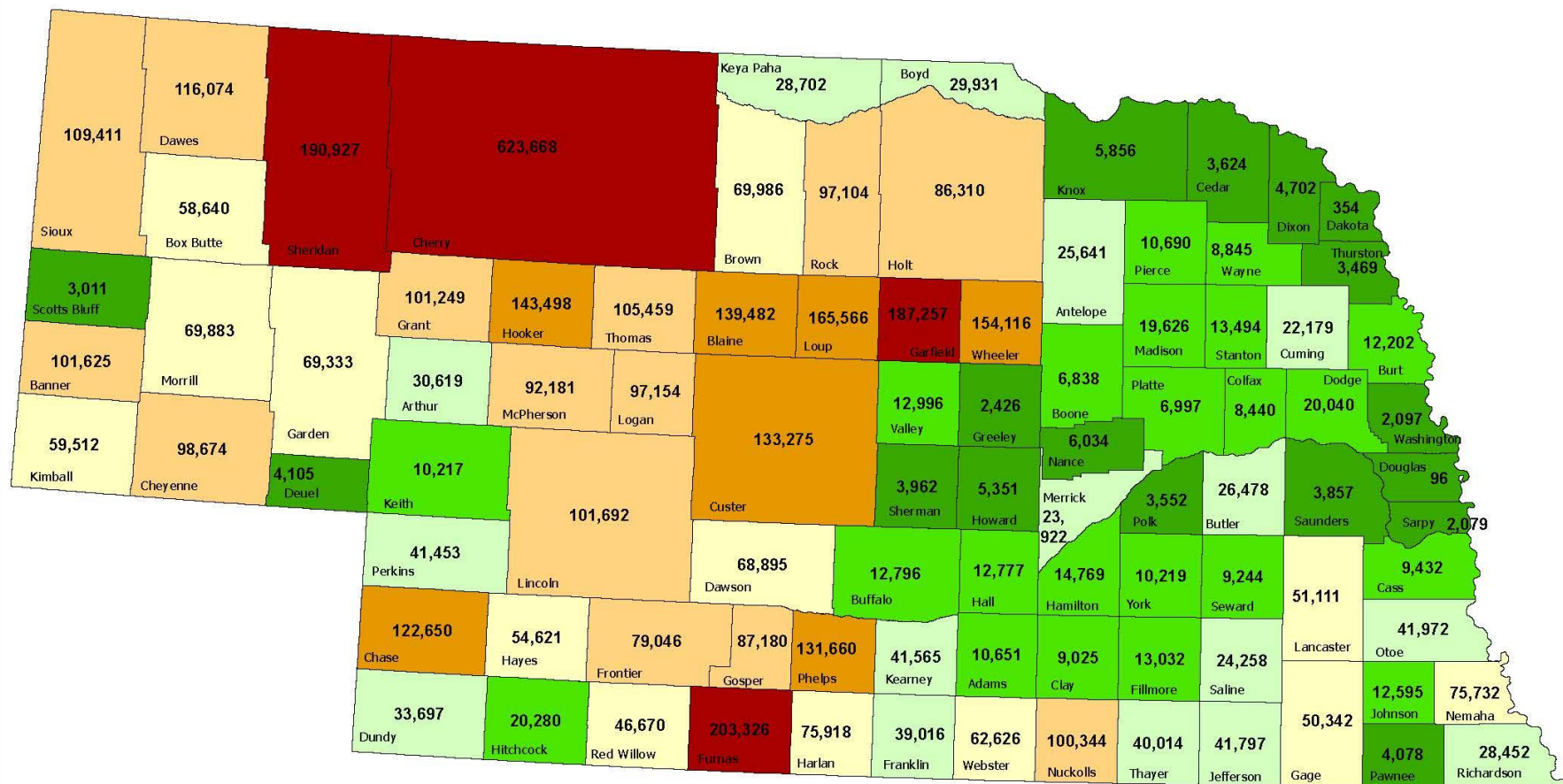
## Conservation Stewardship Program All Active Contracts Thru 2016



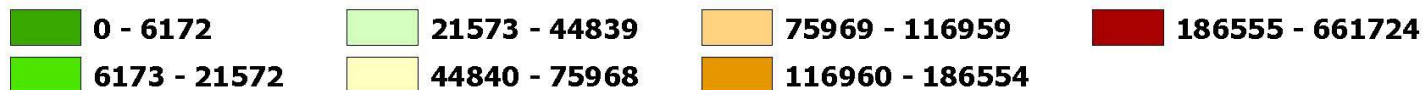
## Contracts



## Conservation Stewardship Program All Acres Thru 2016



## Acres



## Future Signups

- CSP is currently being overhauled
  - Conservation Measurement Tool (CMT) discontinued
  - Enhancements will be more closely tied to Practices. The benefits must be above the Conservation Practice Standard (CPS)
  - Separate payments for existing and additional activities
    - Base payment for maintenance of existing system
    - Regional payment schedule for additional activities
- Goal is to make program simpler and more transparent
- Rollout planned for 2017 general signup

# Agricultural Conservation Easement Program



**FRPP**



**GRP**



**WRP**

# **ACEP – Agricultural Land Easement (ALE)**

# ACEP-ALE - Implementation

- FY 16 ALE Allocation = \$1.1 million.
- FY 16 Overview of ALE-AL and ALE-GSS applications
  - ALE-GSS Applications Received = 2
  - ALE-GSS Applications Approved in FY 16 = 2



# ACEP - Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE)



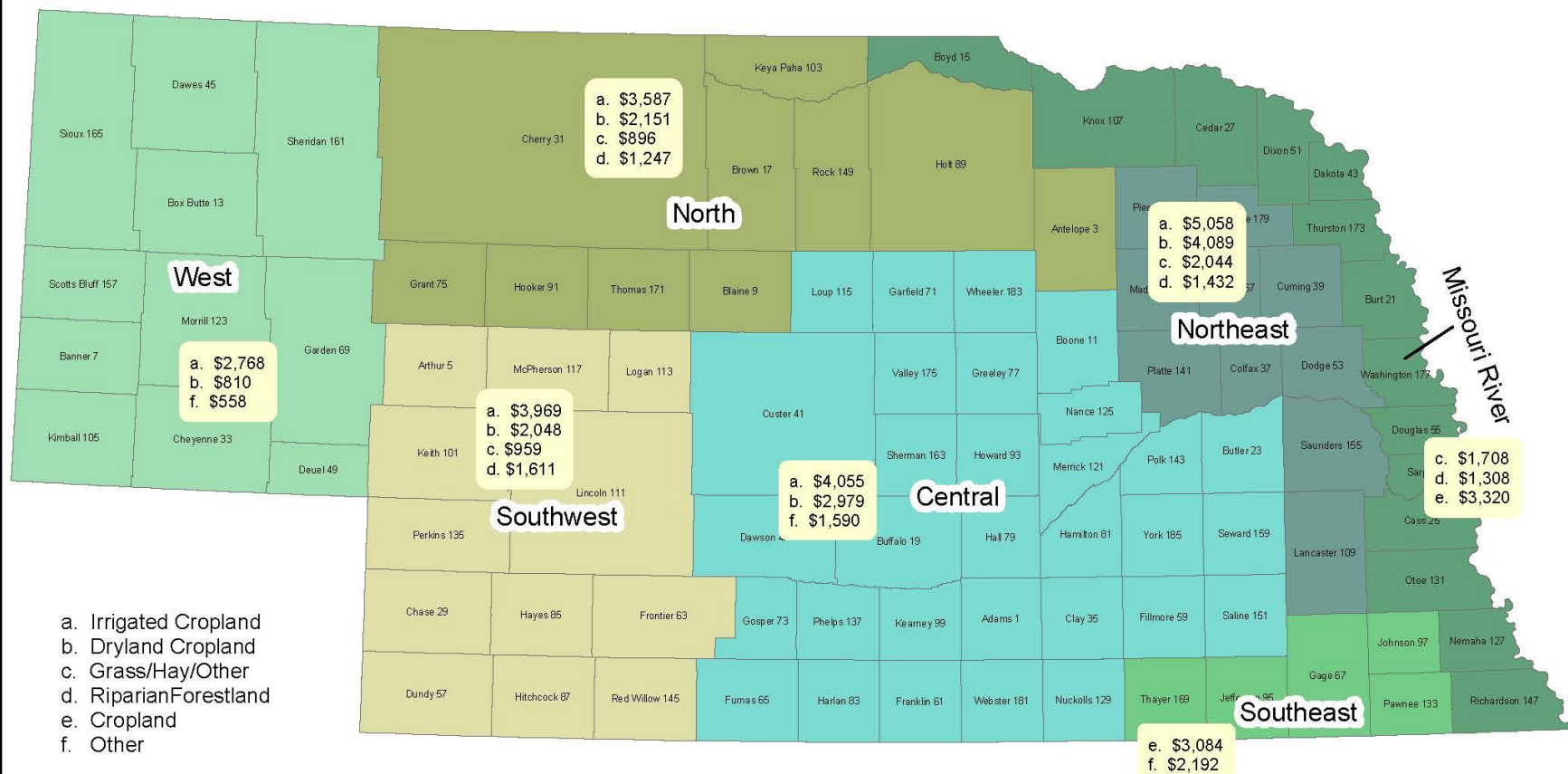
## FY2016 WRE Applications - Allocations

- WRE Applications Received = 59
- WRE Applications Pre-Approved = Pending
- WRE Advisory Allocation = \$ 3.3 million.
- WREP Advisory Allocation=\$1.7 million
- WREP Nebraska Community Foundation Contribution=\$425,000
  - Includes funding for Restoration, Due Diligence, and Closing



# Nebraska Agriculture Conservation Easement Program - Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP-WRE)

## Geographic Area Rate Caps (GARC) by land use for FY 2016



# Questions?



# CONSERVATION

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